

IN THE CLAIMS

1-4 (Cancelled)

5. (Currently amended) An extension pole arrangement comprising successively joined pole segments ~~at least one pole segment~~, each pole segment being substantially identical and comprising:

first and second tube portions, ~~the said first tube portion of a given diameter and~~ extending longitudinally from said ~~the~~ second tube portion and terminating with an open end ~~cap~~;

~~the said~~ second tube portion having an open end with an inside diameter greater than the outside diameter of ~~the said~~ first tube portion, ~~and configured for receiving the first tube portion of an existing pole segment~~;

wherein the first tube portion of a first pole segment is received into the second tube portion of a second pole segment, so that the extension pole is formed with the end cap of the second pole segment formed without removal of the end cap from the first pole segment;

~~the said~~ first tube portion including a locking mechanism configured for coaxing mating engagement with an aperture in said second tube portion for receiving said locking mechanism; and

~~whereby said substantially identical pole segments are conjoinable.~~

6. (Previously presented) The extension pole arrangement of Claim 5, wherein said second tube portion is of substantially reduced length comparable to said first tube portion.

7. (Cancelled)

8. (Currently amended) The extension pole arrangement of Claim ~~5~~, wherein the end cap ~~said protective means~~ is a resilient insert compressibly mounted into the ~~open end of said~~ first tube portion and protruding outward therefrom ~~beyond said open end~~.

9. (Currently amended) An extension pole assembly, comprising:

a first pole segment including:

a first hollow cylindrical end portion; and

a second hollow cylindrical end portion having an external diameter smaller than the internal diameter of the first end portion, and having a ~~protective cap~~ inserted therein;

wherein the second end portion of the first pole segment is received into a first end portion of a second pole segment, the second pole segment configured substantially the same as the first pole segment so that ~~an the extension pole assembly is formed with the~~ having a protective cap of the second pole segment is formed without removal of the ~~protective end cap from of the~~ first pole segment.

10. (Previously presented) The extension pole assembly of Claim 9, wherein the second end portion of the first pole segment and the first end portion of the second pole segment are removably connected by a locking mechanism positioned therebetween.

11. (Previously presented) The extension pole assembly of Claim 10, wherein the locking mechanism comprises an aperture positioned on the first end portion of the second pole segment for receiving a spring mounted push button positioned on the second end of the first pole segment.

12. (Currently amended) The extension pole assembly of Claim 9, wherein the ~~protective cap~~ protrudes beyond the end of the second end portion and is held in place by compression.

13. (Currently amended) An extension pole assembly, comprising:

a plurality of pole segments configured substantially the same and capable of being joined together, each pole segment having a first hollow end portion; and

a second hollow end portion having an external diameter smaller than the internal diameter of the first end portion, and having a ~~protective cap~~ inserted therein;

wherein the second end portion of one pole segment is received into a first end portion of a different pole segment so that ~~as~~ after each successive pole segment is joined together ~~an the~~ extension pole ~~assembly is formed with the~~ having a protective end cap of the last pole segment added ~~is formed without removal of the protective end cap of any other pole segment.~~

14. (Previously presented) The extension pole assembly of Claim 13, wherein the second end portion of one pole segment and the first end portion of a different pole segment are removably connected by a locking mechanism positioned therebetween.

15. (Previously presented) The extension pole assembly of Claim 14, wherein the locking mechanism comprises an aperture positioned on the first end portion of one pole segment for receiving a spring mounted push button positioned on the second end of a different pole segment.

16. (Currently amended) The extension pole assembly of Claim 13, wherein the ~~protective~~ cap protrudes beyond the end of the second end portion and is held in place by compression.